***Writing an Autobiography***

You are now ready to start writing your biography, in this case an autobiography. Some of you will welcome the opportunity to share your own personal experiences, and some will dread it.

You will start with two warming up activities:

Start by answering in complete sentences the questions in the back of this page.

Next, do the following activity: Bring 4 pictures of experiences, places you have visited or family gatherings that you would like to write something about. This is an introductory activity for the autobiography essay that you will be writing. Once you have the pictures, ask for 4 white sheets of paper and paste the picture on the top of the sheet and answer the following questions:

* In this photograph I am \_\_\_\_\_\_\_."
* "One thing I like about this photograph is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_."
* "This photograph was taken \_\_\_\_\_\_\_." (Provide both time and place)
* "\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are in this photograph." (Talk about the people or things that are in the picture)
* "I picked this photograph because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_."

Whether you love this assignment or you hate it, you should start with the knowledge that your story is much more interesting than you probably realize. The important thing is to pick an angle to tell your story instead of just stating facts. Remember that someone wrote your bio already so you don’t want to write the same thing all over again. This time I need you to get involved in the writing, share feelings and emotions.

Your job is to find out what makes your family or your experiences *spicy* and build a narrative around that. In other words, you will research on your own life.

Once you have taken a look at your own life from an outsider’s point of view, you will be able to select the most interesting elements from your research notes to establish a theme.

On the other hand, you can take an ordinary day in your life and turn it into a theme.

It is possible that one event or one day of your life made such a big impact that it could be used as a theme. The end or beginning of the life of another can certainly affect us with a force that is so enormous that it affect our thoughts and actions for a long time.

**Your Essay** Whether you determine that your life story is best summed up by a single event, a single characteristic, or a single day, you can use that one element as a theme. You will define this theme in your introductory paragraph.

Create an outline with several events or activities that relate back to your central theme and turn those into sub-topics (body paragraphs) of your story.

Next, tie up all your experiences in a summary that restates and explains the overriding theme of your life.

You will be writing your essay in first person. You will also have to choose a title and print your autobiography. This is due Wednesday March 4th, 2009.

**Answer these questions in complete sentences. No yes or no answers. Explain your answers.**

1. **How would you describe your family?**
2. **Are your parents married?**
3. **Siblings or an only child?**
4. **If you have siblings are you oldest, middle, or youngest**?
5. **What are your siblings names and ages**?
6. **Which parent do you get along with best?**
7. **What do you fight about with your parents?**
8. **Do you have more than one best friend?**
9. **Who are your best friends?**
10. **What do you like to do when you are together with them?**
11. **Are you an extrovert or an introvert?**
12. **Are you happy?**
13. **Are you comfortable with the way you look**?
14. **How do you dress?**
15. **What did you use to love that you no longer do?**
16. **Was there anything in your past that was traumatizing?**
17. **What is your ambition?**
18. **Are you scared of growing old?**
19. **Do you want to get married?**
20. **Do you prefer indoors or outdoors?**
21. **What is your favorite season:**
22. **What was one of your greatest experiences?**
23. **What was one of your worst?**
24. **Describe your typical day**
25. **Describe a day that you remember as a really great day**
26. **Describe a crappy day in your life**
27. **What makes you happy?**
28. **What makes you sad?**
29. **What is your greatest hope? Fear?**
30. **What would you change in the world if you could?**